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STATE PLEASE PASS TO USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: INVITATION FOR SECRETARY CLINTON AND SPECIAL ENVOY STERN  
TO ATTEND EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT DAYS IN STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN OCTOBER  
22-24

This is an Action request. Please see para 1.

REF: (A) Stockholm 477, (B) Stockholm 478, (C) Stockholm 440, (D)  
Stockholm 412, (E) Stockholm 342, (F) Stockholm 569, (G) Stockholm  
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¶1. (SBU) Summary and Action Request: If the Secretary and Special Envoy Stern are unavailable, Post recommends Deputy Secretary Lew or a similarly high-level USG official attend EU Development Days October 22-24 in order to present U.S. development priorities to EU Development Ministers and the wider development community. End Summary and Action Request.

¶2. (SBU) On June 30, 2009, Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso sent letters inviting Secretary Clinton and Special Envoy Stern to European Development Days to be held October 22-24 in Stockholm. Noting that the U.S. is the European Union's most important external partner and a major donor, the letter to the Secretary said they would be honored to have her lead the plenary session on the global economic crisis as a very strong symbol of the U.S. and EU commitment to working together in tackling poverty worldwide. The letter to Secretary Stern asked him to intervene in the plenary session on climate change.

¶3. (SBU) Post spoke to the lead conference organizer, Ambassador Krister Kumlin about this event. Kumlin promised to send their internal list of acceptances, and said that the Swedish government expects virtually all EU Aid Ministers to attend the dinner Development Cooperation Minister Carlsson is hosting for her EU-27 colleagues on October 21, as well as parts of the European Development Days, October 22-24.

¶4. (SBU) The event will be kicked off by an October 21 dinner hosted by Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson for her EU-27 colleagues, to which a senior USG representative would be invited. The conference plenary would be on October 22, where Kumlin said a senior USG representative would be given a speaking role. On the evening of October 22, Prime Minister Reinfeldt would host a dinner for select participants (60-80), to which a senior USG representative would also be invited.

¶5. (SBU) This unique invitation for a senior USG official to address European Development Days is an innovation of the Swedish EU Presidency, which is seeking to bolster U.S.-EU cooperation by giving senior U.S. officials an opportunity to address EU Ministers. Post recommends that a senior USG official take advantage of this opportunity to present U.S. development priorities to an EU audience.

¶6. (SBU) Sweden is well placed as the host for a U.S.-EU discussion of assistance priorities. Sweden is the world's largest donor as a share of GDP (\$4.3 billion in assistance in 2009), and has told us that during the Swedish EU Presidency it seeks close cooperation

with the U.S. on assistance, and a dialog on assistance to and improve donor coordination in Afghanistan. During the July visit of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Carson, Swedish head of African Affairs at the Foreign Ministry Anders Hagelberg said the EU and United States were more like-minded than ever on assistance issues, and looked forward to close cooperation during the EU Presidency. Sweden hopes to use EU Development Days to bolster its efforts to improve donor coordination, including with multilateral institutions through which Sweden channels about half its development aid.

¶7. (SBU) The top five recipients of Swedish aid are in Africa, where Sweden has an ambitious program (REF D). The fifth largest recipient of Swedish aid is Afghanistan, where the Swedish government tells us it supports a greater civilian presence on reconstruction, and plans to increase its own assistance to \$67.1 million by 2011. Sweden also contributes 450 troops to Afghanistan, and is looking to double its EUPOL contribution to 20 police officers (REF C and E).

¶8. (SBU) The invitation to EU Development Days is the ninth extended by the Swedish EU Presidency for White House, cabinet-level and sub-cabinet level U.S. officials to present U.S. views to an EU-related meeting. USG officials invited by the Swedish Presidency to present to informal ministerial-level meetings in Sweden include:

Secretary of Education Duncan  
Secretary of Energy Chu  
Deputy Secretary of Energy Poneman  
Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change Browner  
Secretary of Labor Solis  
Secretary of Health Sebelius

Secretary of Homeland Security Napolitano  
Secretary Clinton  
Special Envoy Stern

¶9. (SBU) So far, no USG official above the Assistant Secretary level has been able to take advantage of the opportunity offered by Sweden to present U.S. views to an audience of EU Ministers, although the invitations to the Secretary and Special Envoy Stern are still pending.

#### Background on European Development Days

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¶10. (U) European Development Days is the fourth annual event jointly organized by the European Commission and the country holding the Presidency of the EU. It will be the largest meeting in Sweden held under the Swedish Presidency with over 1000 invitees including Ministers, Heads of State, and non-government organizations, and the general public. Speakers include the Presidents of Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Federated States of Micronesia, the Swedish Prime Minister, Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation, British Minister of State for International Development, and Czech Deputy Prime Minister. Delegates also include Nobel laureates and other prominent figures from the world of academia, business and arts.

¶11. (U) The stated purpose of European Development Days is to create a dialogue on aid and development and to address urgent issues as well as more long-term challenges. The meeting itself is billed as an open forum gathering all levels and groups of development actors in addition to the general public.

¶12. (U) Previous meetings of European Development Days were held in Brussels in 2006, Lisbon in 2007 and Strasbourg in 2008. This year's theme is Citizenship and Development. Two of Sweden's profile development issues will receive particular focus: democracy and climate change. The financial situation will be another theme.

¶13. (U) The program days include a number of high-level plenary sessions, round-table discussions with politicians, researchers, civil society representatives and the media. There will also be a 'Development Village' an exhibition hosting countries, institutions, organizations and others who want to use this opportunity to present

their ideas and projects to all visitors. Seminars, performances and other activities within the fairgrounds will be organized by the European Commission, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and other exhibitors. Offsite, development-related events and activities will be held all over Stockholm. The link to the skeleton agenda is at:  
[http://www.eudevdays.eu/agenda/overview\\_en.htm](http://www.eudevdays.eu/agenda/overview_en.htm)

¶14. (U) Comment: So far, the only U.S. participant listed on the EU Development Days website is an assistant professor who is also Technical Advisor on HIV/AIDS at UNFPA. Post believes a senior level USG official should address this conference.

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